481 Judges/Additional Judges were in position in the High Courts, leaving 104 vacancies of Judges/Additional Judges to be filled up. These vacancies arose, from time to time, due to retirement, resignation and elevation etc. of the Judges.

The procedure for such appointments involves consultations among several constitutional authorities. Every effort is being made to fill existing vacancies at the earliest.

Election in States

701. SHRI SITARAM KESRI: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the States in which elections are due to be held during the year 1998;

(b) whether Government propose to hold elections, separately for each State;

(c) whether any consultations have been held with the Chief Ministers of respective States;

(d) if so, details thereof; and

(e) if not, whether Government propose to have consultations before finalising the schedule for holding these elections?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) General elections to the Legislative Assemblies of Mizoram, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan National Capital territory of Delhi due to be held by December, 1998.

(b) The Election Commission of India has not yet taken any decision regarding holding general elections to the aforesaid four Legislative Assemblies either separately or according to a common programme.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

(e) The Election Commission of India has informed that under its plenary powers, it is not required to consult the Chief Ministers in this regard.

Vacancies of High Court Judges

702. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of vacancies of High Court Judges as on April 1, 1998, in different High Courts; and the percentage of such vacancies constitute with respect to the total number of sanctioned post of judges; indicating the period for which the vacancies are lying;

(b) the total back-log of cases in each High Court; and

(c) the reasons for the delay in following up the vacancies?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) As on 1.4.1998, against the sanctioned strength of 585 Judges/Additional Judges of High Courts, 485 Judges/Additional Judges were in position, leaving 100 vacancies of Judges/Additional Judges to be filled up. These vacancies arose, from time to time, due to retirement, resignation and elevation etc. of the Judges.

(b) A statement is laid on the Table of the House. (*see* below)

(c) The procedure for appointment of Judges of High Courts involves consultations among several constitutional authorities. Every efforts is being made to fill existing vacancies at the earliest.

Statement

Pendency of cases in the High Courts as on 31.12.1997

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	Number of cases pending
1.	Allahabad	865455*
2.	Andhra Pradesh	133,211
3.	Bombay	235,381
4.	Calcutta	282,209
5.	Delhi	165,855 (up to 6/97)
6.	Gauhati	34,165

Sl. No.	Name of the High Court	Number of cases pending
7.	Gujarat	122,966
8.	Himachal Pradesh	13,352
9.	Jammu & Kashmir	98,645
10.	Karnataka	135,389
11.	Kerala	250,261
12.	Madhya Praesh	80,848
13.	Madras	326,619
14.	Orissa	84,897
15.	Patna	84,666
16.	Punjab & Haryana	170,671
17.	Rajasthan	98,416
18.	Sikkim	95
	TOTAL	3174,101

*As on 31.12.96

Proposal to set-up a De-limitation Commission

703. SHRI K. M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is proposal to set up a De-limitation Commission;

(b) if so, the schedule for setting up a De-limitation Commission;

(c) the procedural problems in establishing a De-limitation Commission; and

(d) if so, the full details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) As per existing provisions of the Constitution, fresh delimitation can be taken only after the publication of figures of the first census taken after the year 2000. In the meeting of leaders of various political parties held on 22nd May 1998, it was felt that as the year 2000 is close by, fresh delimitation may be taken as per existing provisions of the Constitution in this regard.

Establishment of a permanent bench of Gujarat High Court

704. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of LAW AND JUSTICE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a demand of the people of Gujarat for establishment of a permanent bench of Gujarat High Court at Surat or Rajkot is pending with the Central Government;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the demand is under active consideration of Government;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI M. THAMBI DURAI): (a) to (e) Representations have been received from the Bar Associations etc. from time to time, for establishment of Benches of Gujarat High Court at Rajkot, Surat, Vadodara, Kutch and Bhavnagar. However, no proposal has been received from the Government of Gujarat, in consultation with the Chief Justice of the Gujarat, High Court in this regard. Necessary action in the matter can be taken by the Central Government only on receipt of such a proposal.

निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों में मतदाताओं की संख्या में विषमता

705. **श्री शिव चरण सिंह:**
श्री गोविन्दराम मिरी:

क्या **विधि और न्याय** मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या यह सच है कि 1998 के पिछले लोकसभा चुनावों में कुछ निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों में मतदाताओं की संख्या 20 लाख से अधिक थी जबकि कुछ अन्य निर्वाचन क्षेत्रों में यह संख्या एक लाख से भी कम थी;

(ख) यदि हां, तो क्या वर्तमान सरकार द्वारा इस विषमता को दूर करने के लिए कुछ कदम उठाए गये/उठाए जाने का प्रस्ताव है; और